

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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Observing Chaplaincy Month in May — Female chaplain finds ministry demanding, rewarding

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Barbara Kimbrel's day at the office can be long and tiring, but she's never felt more rewarded.

"I sense God's pleasure saying, 'Yes, this is what I want you to do.' I'm the one who comes away blessed," said the lone female member of the chaplain staff at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center (MBMC) in Jackson.



Barbara Kimbrel, chaplain at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson, pauses to study the prayer quilt in the lobby of the Jackson hospital. The individual panels of the quilt represent the medical center's departments, designed and produced by members of those departments. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

Kimbrel said she has been well-received as a woman in a predominantly male ministry.

"Everyone here has been wonderful. Working with mothers and babies just comes natural. Women will talk to a woman about things that might be embarrassing in front of a man," she explained.

Kimbrel, a native of Birmingham, Ala., said she felt God calling her at the age of five, but she thought God was calling her into foreign missions.

Working as a registered medical technologist, however, clarified for her that the call she felt was actually for hospital chaplaincy.

At the age of 44, she took a "step of faith" and enrolled at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

After receiving a master of divinity degree from Southeastern in 1988, she served as a hospital chaplain in Durham, N.C., before returning to Birmingham to join the clinical pastoral education program at Baptist Medical Center.

Since 1992, she has served full-time on the MBMC chaplain staff where her assigned responsibilities include:

- labor and delivery.
- neonatal intensive care.
- pediatrics and pediatric intensive care.
- adult intensive care.
- surgery.
- diabetics.
- geriatrics.
- oncology.
- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).
- transitional care.

Years of seminary study and other preparation go into a chaplaincy career, Kimbrel said.

Kimbrel has been ordained by a Southern Baptist church and endorsed by the

Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's Commission on Chaplaincy.

In addition, she has nine units (3,600 hours) of clinical pastoral education; is a Fellow in the College of Chaplains; and participates in a continuing education curriculum.

How do patients and their families react when Kimbrel visits with them in their rooms at the medical center?

"Typically, they are open and receptive. When people go through a serious experience like this, they are truthful with me. Many of them already know the Lord, but there are also opportunities to witness to lost people.

"There's always the seed that you plant. I pray with them and leave devotional material," she said.

Kimbrel pointed out that she also has a strong bond with the medical center's 3,000 employees.

"I feel I am as much here for the employees as I am for the patients. The prayer requests I have right now from hospital employees include an employee's mother who is terminally ill, employees concerned with health problems, and a mother/daughter relationship," she said.

Kimbrel often deals with tragedy, which means she often deals with people who are angry with God.

"I hear what they are saying. I tell them it's okay to be angry with God. I facilitate their emotions, so they can talk about it," she said.

Kimbrel foresees

momentous changes in the future of chaplaincy, most notably the trend toward more community involvement in addition to responsibilities at the hospital.

"Home health programs are really expanding; I see a role for chaplains in the home health care field. Years ago, the challenge for a chaplain was to try to see every patient in the hospital. Now, chaplaincy has expanded to include many other things," she said.

As examples, Kimbrel pointed to the involvement of chaplains in the construction of MBMC's Habitat for Humanity house in Jackson, and to her invitation to speak at a World Missions Conference in Pascagoula in February 1997.

The topic of her talk at the conference will be, "Going Where Others Cannot Go."

"I love to tell the chaplaincy story. I enjoy the work and feel called to do it," she said.

Barbara's Day

24 hours in the life of a hospital chaplain

Single mother, age 14, gives birth to second child.
Good news from patient's tests: no cancer!
Teenager paralyzed in motor vehicle accident.
Premature baby's kidneys miraculously start working.
Female, age 21, receives AIDS diagnosis.
Use sign language with deaf mother during childbirth.
Attend surgery of employee at another hospital.
Minister to parents and hospital staff after stillbirth.
Teach a seminar.
Arrange patient's request for renewal of wedding vows.
Provide counseling session.
Female prostitute, age 31, diagnosed with AIDS.
Attend a funeral.
Manage support group meetings.

— Source: Barbara Kimbrel, MBMC

Flying high

When U.S. astronaut Shannon Lucid blasted off in late March on her way to the Russian Mir space station in orbit around the earth, the prayers of special Russian Christian friends went with her. Lucid, who will spend five months aboard the space station with two Russian cosmonauts, attended the International Baptist Fellowship in Moscow during a lengthy training course in that country. "Shannon was a quiet person who... never drew attention to herself, only to her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," said Donald B. Deel, pastor of the fellowship and a Southern Baptist missionary. Lucid's life reads like an action novel. At the age of six weeks, she and her Baptist missionary parents became Japanese prisoners of war in occupied China, spending a year in a concentration camp before fleeing to the U.S. after being released in a prisoner exchange. They returned to China after the war, but were forced to flee again when the communists took control. Her trip to the space station marked her fifth flight into space, and she holds the U.S. space endurance record.

Music upswing

Contemporary American Christian music is experiencing phenomenal growth around the world as people relate to the gospel message contained in the music, according to international distributors. "American artists have the opportunity to impact a brand new society with the truth," said Anton Bekker, whose South African distribution company has experienced 50% annual growth for the past three years. Garritt aan't Goor, a Christian concert promoter in the Netherlands, agreed and stressed the importance of involving local churches in the contemporary Christian music scene. "We need more connection with churches," he said. David Green has been involved in international tours with his brother, popular Christian recording artist Steve Green, and he understands what Garritt is saying. "We've... gone in with local people who are tied to the church," he said. Although international touring is expensive, Christian recording artist Kenny Marks said, "If an artist will take his time and go there, he'll find friends. Going there opens an incredible amount of doors."

Looking Back...

10 years ago

First Church, Meridian, celebrates the ministries of three church staffers who have each served the church for at least 25 years: pastor Beverly Tinnin, minister of education David McCubbin, and minister of music/senior adults John McLaughlin.

20 years ago

Texan Donald T. McGregor, associate editor of *The Baptist Record* and former editor of the California Baptist newsjournal, is elected editor to replace the retiring Joe Odle, who served in that capacity for 17 years.

50 years ago

Oxford native Roland Q. Leavell, superintendant of evangelism for the Home Mission Board, accepts the presidency of New Orleans Seminary after Duke K. McCall resigns to become head of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

And violence filled the land

There are countries in the world where the largest employers are security-guard providers. Every store and market — and many private homes — employs a 24-hour guard service.

Random shootings, exploding buildings, mail bombs, parking lot robberies, and churches being held up during a worship service — not much surprises us any more.

In Ezekiel 8:17, the prophet said, "And violence filled the land." **USA Weekend** (April 27, 1996, issue), in an article by Brenda Turner, calls this trend a "culture crash." Junk values reign in American culture. Our weakened families are the bottom line.

Now books are being published on keeping our churches in a zone of safety. The "security of the believer" has taken on a whole new meaning. Seminaries are teaching seminars on lawsuits, IRS audits, federal church bus regulations, and risk management strategies.

Church Administration mag-

azine, published by the Baptist Sunday School Board, devoted most of its June 1996 issue to "violence."

Glenn A. Brown, editor of the Oklahoma **Baptist Messenger**, reported on the terrorist bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, and how churches can deal with such immense crises.

Does your church have a contingency plan for violence against and within the church? What about counseling the victims of violence? Churches must be prepared to help families who survive the anguish that results from violent acts.

New ministries will be mandated by circumstances of the society in which we live. *Crime's* price tag for our nation has topped \$20 billion per year. The church will be paying its share of this bill in the years to come.

The moral lapse in our nation has spawned an alarming lack of respect for the laws of our land. The number of juveniles arrested

for murder or attempted murder increased 142% in the 10-year span 1983-93. Some 37 million Americans were injured by criminal action in the past 20 years.

The church is considered an easy target for lawsuits charging negligence in the face of violence. After all, the church is supposed to love everyone, strangers are welcomed, and its attitude is one of trust.

Rex Frieze, former chief business and financial officer at First Church of Orlando, Fla., speaking recently at the New Orleans Seminary, said: "It used to be unheard of for a church to be sued. Now lawyers see churches as easy targets with deep pockets.... The church must be the pacesetter in demonstrating... the highest levels of integrity in organizing and operation of its ministry affairs."

Violence has always provoked change. Now there are policies and plans that must change within the church if we are to maintain our best witness.



Source: **Close to Home Revisited** by John McPherson, available at your local bookstore or by calling (800) 727-3480.

Guest opinion...

Portrait of a good minister includes positive involvement in community

By Larry S. McDonald

Recently, I received an invitation to be a member of an ethics committee at a local private hospital to consider ethical-medical issues encountered by the hospital.

This is not the first invitation I have received to be involved in a community-oriented position. Last month I led the dedication prayer in the opening of a premier regional grocery store. Next month I will complete involvement in a year-long class of leaders from business, education, government, legal, and religious areas spanning the entire state.

How did all of these opportunities come my way? They came because I was willing to move outside the safety and comfort of my Christian circle of friends. To be a good minister, one must be a positive Christian witness in the community where he lives.

Some pastors isolate themselves in the name of separation from the world. Other pastors so identify with the world they become like the world. Neither one of these extremes is a viable option. A pastor is called to be

in the world but not of the world. Jesus called us to be the salt and the light of the world.

This means one is to penetrate society at all levels, bringing the distinctiveness of a Christian world view. How can we do this unless we become involved in the communities in which we live?

How does a pastor get involved in his community? First, by getting to know other leaders. Analyze your community. Identify those who are leaders. Make a conscious effort to get to know them.

Second, find areas of common interest and agreement with these leaders. Emphasize these areas in the initial building of the relationship. Find ways you can help the other leader accomplish some of his goals.

Third, always be up front about your Christian faith and convictions, but remember also to be tactful and loving. A person who can articulate his beliefs without being offensive or defensive will win the respect of others. As you gain the respect of others, you will earn the right to have

your voice heard.

A couple of years ago, I was an assistant coach for my son's buddy ball team. I became friends with one of the other assistants. After the season was over, we then all moved to involvement in Cub Scouts. It wasn't long before this new friend asked if we could get together and talk.

When we sat down, through tears, he acknowledged he was not sure if there was a God. After several conversations and some reading, my friend reaffirmed his belief in God as revealed through Jesus Christ. This is one of the joyous results of community involvement.

If we are to be good ministers, we must follow the example of Christ in moving out of the four walls of the church building and rubbing shoulders in the community as a positive Christian witness.

McDonald is pastor of Crossgates Church, Brandon. He serves as volunteer chaplain at River Oaks Hospital in Flowood, and on the Mississippi Economic Council's Leadership Jackson team.

THE FRAGMENTS

The burning candle

I watched the eyes of the three-year-old light up. The three burning candles were reflected in the blue-green eyes. Anticipation, joy, satisfaction, fulfillment, are just some of the words I would use to describe that birthday party.

Somewhere along the birthday trail, we lost so much of whatever it is that delights us as children. We treat birthdays as grim reminders that "you are still here, but don't get your hopes up."

Age bestows white hair, longevity, and — hopefully — a bit of wisdom. Still, Blake said: "The man who never alters his opinion is like standing water, and

breeds reptiles of the mind."

As the westering sun drops lower, many of us will lay worn out opinions aside. It is said that an opinion is something you hold and a conviction is something that holds you.

The psalmist said, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away" (Psalm 90:10).

"So, teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psalm 90:12).

— GH

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Editorial Associate.....Florence Larrimore
Circulation Manager.....Renee Walley
Bookkeeper.....Betty Anne Bailey
Layout/Advertising.....Shannon T. Simpson
Proofreader.....Betty Smith
Editor Emeritus.....Don McGregor

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Kentucky Baptists to vote on reduction in SBC giving

CEDARMORE, Ky. (BP) — A proposal to reduce Cooperative Program gifts channeled to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) from Kentucky by 2%, from 37 to 35%, has been approved by the state convention's executive board.

Messengers to the Kentucky

Baptist Convention (KBC) in November will be asked to approve the proposal, with the change beginning in September 1997.

The change, approved on a 59-36 vote by the KBC executive board May 7, was proposed by a Cooperative Program work group appointed out of the board's busi-

ness and finance committee.

The work group reported financial projections made in the late 1970s and 1980s related to Bold Mission Thrust were "unrealistically ambitious" and have not come close to being met by Kentucky's churches.

Bold Mission Thrust, launched

in 1979, is a Southern Baptist effort to share the gospel with every person on earth by the year 2000.

The proposal would reduce KBC contributions to the SBC by about \$375,000 — 5.4% — in the 1997-98 fiscal year.

For the 1996-97 fiscal year, KBC is projected to forward to the SBC \$6.94 million.

In response to the vision of Bold Mission Thrust, KBC earlier adopted a goal of increasing over time the percentage of undesignated Cooperative Program gifts sent to the SBC to 40%, leaving 60% for state ministries.

During this period, the percentage given to the SBC increased from 35% to 37%.

However, while the KBC has increased the percentage of its receipts forwarded to the SBC, the state's churches on average have reduced the percentage of their receipts forwarded to the Kentucky Cooperative Program.

The Bold Mission Thrust goals also projected Kentucky Baptist churches would contribute \$57.6 million to the Cooperative Program in the year 2000.

However, that goal is three times higher than what Kentucky Baptist churches actually contributed last year.

The average percentage of undesignated church receipts given to the Cooperative Program in Kentucky has declined from a high of 11.88% in 1987 to 9.97% last year.

This has placed a squeeze on mission money available for use in Kentucky, the work group reported.

The work group said this squeeze has been made more severe by two other factors: the KBC assuming ownership of Jonathan Creek Assembly and the

KBC assuming greater responsibility for matching contributions to ministers' annuities.

Several pastors compared the KBC's predicament to tight financial situations faced in their churches in the past. At such a time, reducing missions giving isn't the answer, they argued.

Bill Groover, pastor of Bethany Church in Louisville, said he has faced difficult financial challenges in three churches in the past.

"Each time we increased our missions giving and God blessed us," he reported.

For the KBC to decrease its contributions to the SBC "would send out the message that this is the way to solve financial problems in churches," Groover said.

Supporters of the proposal, however, said comparing the KBC's ability to inspire greater contributions from the churches cannot be compared to a pastor's ability to inspire greater contributions to local church offerings.

"The churches have voted with their pocketbooks. They have not caught the vision of Bold Mission Thrust," said Michael Barley, pastor of Franklin Street Church in Louisville and a member of the business and finance committee.

Barley noted he hopes the downward trend in giving from the churches would be reversed. In light of how churches have been giving, "this is a realistic proposal," he said.

Billy Randolph, a layman from Franklin, echoed Barley's thoughts, speaking in favor of the motion. "There's a time when you've got to balance your checkbook," he said. "We can't place any more money than we actually have."

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

The Baptist Record

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MBC '96 sessions reduced to four at messengers' plea

By Tim Nicholas

The 1996 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) Oct. 29-30 at First Church, Jackson, has been shortened to four sessions from the five-session meetings of 1994 and 1995, according to Ken Anderson, order of business committee chairman.

Anderson, pastor of First Church, Saltillo, said the Wednesday afternoon session was deleted because the committee received a great deal of feedback from messengers.

"They needed to get home for Wednesday evening services," he said.

Anderson said the second reason for dropping the Wednesday afternoon session was low attendance during that session for the past two years.

During 1990-93, there were six convention sessions each year. There were five sessions in 1989, but the convention began on Monday evening.

"We have all the main business sessions covered; that's a constitu-

tional matter. We had to crunch the time, of course," said Anderson.

He added, "If everyone will stay on time, we'll be on time."

Featured speakers at the meeting include Jimmy Porter, E.K. Bailey, Clarence Cooper, Bill Causey, and Mildred McWhorter.

Porter, first-term MBC president and pastor of First Church, McComb, will deliver the president's address on Tuesday morning.

Bailey, pastor of Concord Missionary Baptist Church, Dallas, will close the Tuesday morning session.

Cooper, who is serving his first term as MBC first vice president, is pastor of Emmanuel Church, Grenada. He will preach the convention's annual sermon on Tuesday afternoon.

Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), will speak on Tuesday evening.

McWhorter, a retired home missionary to Houston, Texas, who now resides in Franklin, Ga., will be the closing speaker on

Wednesday morning.

Mississippian Bob Hamblin, a faculty member at New Orleans Seminary and interim pastor at First Church, Hattiesburg, will deliver the Bible Treasure devotionals on Tuesday morning, Tuesday afternoon, and Wednesday morning.

A special feature of the convention will be "My Journey in Christ," consisting of testimonies by retired church staffers, including Joe Ratcliff of Collins, James E. Walker of Meridian, and David McCubbin of Meridian.

Also, ministers age 65 and over will be recognized during the convention.

Musicians for the meeting include the sanctuary choir of First Church, McComb; the sanctuary choir of Emmanuel Church, Grenada; the Mississippi Singing Churchmen; the Mississippi College concert chorale; and One Voice, a singing and drama ensemble sponsored by the MBCB Church Music Department.

In addition to Anderson, members of the order of business committee include:

— Franklin Denham, minister of music at Highland Church, Meridian.

— Marcus Peagler, education director at Broadmoor Church, Jackson.

— Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson.

— Paul Smith, pastor of Bethel Church, Monticello.

— Joan Tyler, member of First Church, Collins.

Jimmy Porter and Bill Causey serve as ex-officio committee members.

Anderson noted the committee is currently working on speakers for the 1997 Mississippi Baptist Convention, scheduled for Oct. 28-29 at First Church, Jackson.

Committee members traditionally cite difficulty in obtaining convention speakers when invited with less than a year's notice.

Nicholas is director, MBCB Office of Communications.

BR posts deadlines

The Baptist Record posts the following deadlines for submitting news and advertising articles:

Deadline for submission of news items is Thursday noon prior to the following Thursday's publication. Example: In order for an item to appear in the June 13 issue, it must be received in The Baptist Record office by noon on Thursday, June 6.

The item must be typed or written clearly (with all pertinent facts included), and submitted by mail. Enclose a contact name and phone number in case a question arises.

Photographs should also be submitted by mail. People and activities depicted in the photo should be clearly described and identified. Black and white photos are preferred; high-contrast, well-lighted color photos are accepted. Polaroid photos do not reproduce well and should be avoided.

Deadline for reservation of advertising space is two weeks prior to the desired publication date. Example: In order for an advertisement to be included in the June 13 issue, space should be reserved with the advertising coordinator by noon on May 30.

Ad materials are due in The Baptist Record office 10 calendar days prior to publication.

For more information, contact The Baptist Record at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.



Witness in Bangladesh

Stephen Sarkar (center) and his wife Julie (right) of Dhaka, Bangladesh, visit with Philip Thurman in the offices of The Baptist Record during the Sarkars' recent trip to the United States. Thurman, associate minister of singles at First Church, Jackson, is the son of Tom and Gloria Thurman, Southern Baptist missionaries to Bangladesh, and a lifelong friend of the Sarkars. Stephen Sarkar is national director of The Christian Life, an evangelistic organization in Bangladesh that in 1995 alone used the "Jesus" film more than 2,000 times as a witness to over 540,000 Bangladeshi citizens. Sarkar reports that about 20% of the film's viewers make a decision to follow Christ. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



Community worship service

Five Pelahatchie pastors and Pelahatchie Mayor Tommy Lyle (third from right) participated in the community's annual Easter sunrise service at the Pelahatchie Lake Pavilion on April 7. Attended by more than 100 people, the service is one among four integrated services throughout the year intended to promote racial unity. The pastors (from left) are: Howard Herring, pastor of Pelahatchie United Methodist Church; Fred Parker, pastor of Pelahatchie First Apostolic Church; Shelby Singleton, pastor of Little Zion Methodist Church; Lyle; C.D. Tate, pastor of Pelahatchie Church of Christ, Holiness; and Michael Glenn, pastor of Pelahatchie Baptist Church.

SBC leaders say restructuring won't lessen disaster ministry

NASHVILLE (BP) — There will be no change in Southern Baptist Convention (SBC)-related ministry to victims of hurricanes, floods, and other disasters under the "Covenant for a New Century," SBC leaders noted in statements released May 17.

Further, the SBC leaders described as "unilateral" and "not necessary" the creation of a new Association of State Brotherhood Leadership by those leaders whose work involves, in part, disaster relief coordination in their states.

Said Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, "This unilateral action of the state Brotherhood leaders is certainly unexpected and surprising. I hope they will re-evaluate their intentions and decide to continue working with (the new North American Mission Board [NAMB] being created under the restructuring) in the same relationship of cooperation which has existed for a long time with the Brotherhood Commission."

Robert Reccord, chairman of the Implementation Task Force (ITF) appointed by the Executive Committee to oversee the SBC restructuring, said the ITF "is thoroughly supportive of the convention's disaster relief program. We have indicated at every turn that the ITF would support this important aspect of our convention's ministries, and would work to avoid lapses during agency restructuring."

The Covenant for a New Century restructuring places the crucial disaster relief ministry assignment with the new NAMB, Reccord noted, quoting the Covenant's wording that the NAMB will "assist churches in relief ministries to victims

of disaster."

"The task force has absolutely no intention of varying from the stated direction of the Covenant," Reccord said.

"It would certainly have been beneficial for all concerned had the state Brotherhood leadership communicated their concerns and intentions with the ITF," Reccord continued. "I think they would have agreed that the new association was not necessary."

The Covenant, approved by messengers to the SBC sesquicentennial meeting in Atlanta last June, will reduce the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12, including the NAMB merger of the current Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission, and Radio and Television Commission.

The new Association of State Brotherhood Leadership was created during the annual Brotherhood Commission-sponsored Disaster Relief Round Table Meeting, April 30-May 2, attended by 26 Brotherhood leaders from 20 state conventions at the Tennessee Baptist Convention offices in Brentwood.

News of the association's formation was circulated May 9 in a release written by Will Pollard, Brotherhood leader for the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio and editor of the Ohio Baptist Messenger.

"The concern of the new Association of State Brotherhood Leadership is that the momentum of these ministries not be lost during the days of transition," Pollard wrote.

He was referring to disaster relief work coordinated by the SBC Brotherhood Commission, state conventions, or local Baptist association-owned and -operated units, encompassing 65 feeding units, 46 recovery units,

Randall Turner should not have too much trouble when it comes to carrying the flame in the Olympic Torch Relay.

"At this time last year, I was running up to 25 miles per week," said Turner, pastor of Laurel's First Church. "I've cut back considerably. We only have to carry it for one kilometer, so I don't think it will be a problem."

Turner is one of approximately 60 Mississippians who have been chosen by the United Way of Mississippi to carry the torch on its route from Los Angeles to Atlanta, where the Summer Olympics will begin on July 19.

The flame will be in Mississippi on May 25, when Turner will carry the torch into Prentiss.

"...The torch will come into Vicksburg and then to Jackson," Turner said. "They have told us to be ready to spend several hours up

12 command-units, and 13 temporary emergency child-care units, manned by a total of 10,000 trained volunteers in 23 states.

According to the SBC Brotherhood Commission, Baptist disaster relief volunteers have prepared 80% of the meals served by the American Red Cross since Hurricane Hugo in 1989. The Red Cross and Brotherhood Commission have operated for a decade on a signed statement outlining roles of the two agencies in disaster response.

State leaders serving on the four-man Brotherhood study group were Tommy Puckett of Alabama, Tim Bearden of Tennessee, Lloyd Jackson of Virginia, and Bob Simpkins of Kentucky. Bob Dixon, executive director, Texas Baptist Men, also was listed as involved in the study as a co-convenor representing the state leaders to work with the Brotherhood Commission for their annual state planning meeting with commission personnel.

Said Chapman of the Executive Committee: "Members of Baptist Men across our convention hopefully understand that this new organization was not precipitated by any decisions made by the ITF."

"On the contrary, members of ITF had no reason to anticipate anything other than the same spirit of cooperation which has previously existed between state and SBC Brotherhood organizations."

"I am hopeful that Baptist Men will encourage state leaders to work toward resolving whatever concerns caused them to initiate the forming of an organization to do what is already being accomplished in cooperation with SBC Brotherhood efforts."

Laurel pastor "thrilled" to run in state's Olympic torch relay

By Shawn Wansley

there, and we plan to participate to the fullest."

Turner did not quite know what to make of it when he was informed he would be a Community Torch Bearer. "I was in Colorado skiing in March with a group of high school seniors and I got a call telling me I had been chosen," he said. "It kind of took me by surprise because I knew that one or two selections had been made. I knew that I had been nominated and I was just thrilled to be nominated."

"But I was just taken aback when I got the call. I was thrilled because it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

Athletics is something that Turner enjoys, both as a participant and a spectator. He looks forward to not only the torch relay, but the Olympics in Atlanta.

"I am a sportsman and a sports fan and somewhat of an athlete," he said. "The Olympics, to me, represent the ultimate in athletic achievement. Not only that, but the international brotherhood it promotes...."

Turner points to previous Olympic games where such athletes as Bruce Jenner, Mary Lou Retton, and Olga Korbut made names for themselves.

"I remember that Japanese gymnast who performed his last event with a broken leg," he said. "That

epitomized the Olympic spirit. Unfortunately, another memory that stands out is Munich in 1972, which was a very bad thing."

Even though he will only carry the torch for one kilometer, Turner believes he can use the torch to benefit others for many years to come.

"They are giving the torch bearers a chance to purchase your torch," he said. "I've made arrangements to purchase my torch and I'm already thinking about the object lessons I can use after I've had this experience to symbolize the light of the world, carrying the light, and spreading the good news."

"Certainly, that is all at the heart and the essence of everything I am and everything I do."

Wansley is sports editor for the Laurel Leader-Call.



Turner

MWBTS gives degree to man with state ties

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — One person with ties to Mississippi was among the 102 individuals who received degrees during recent commencement exercises at Midwestern Seminary.

David Wallace, who was born in Pascagoula, was awarded the seminary's master of divinity degree. Wallace received the bachelor of science degree in 1993 from Blue Mountain College. He is currently youth minister at First Church of Harrisonville, Mo.

Evangelists' Profile

This space is dedicated to Mississippi men and women who have committed themselves to vocational evangelism. Churches are encouraged to take advantage of their talents in helping to reap the harvest.

This week's evangelist

The Barrow Family
Hurley

Years in Full-time Ministry: 8
Ministry: Southern-style gospel music sung to taped accompaniment or acappella; original songs by Martha Barrow and her son-in-law Dalton Scarborough

Local ministry: children's ministry, including children's choir, musicals and puppet

Church membership: Temple Church, 1000 N. 1st St., Jackson, Miss. 39201

Phone: (601) 933-1111 and (601) 933-1112

Unique missionary parents' group helps far-flung families stay close

By James R. Walker

The Mississippi Missionary Parents' Fellowship met April 26-27 at Camp Garaywa in Clinton.

Hiram Powell told of his volunteer missionary experiences in the United States and around the world — from helping to build "pre-fab" church buildings in Brazil to being a mission bookkeeper in Africa.

He encouraged the group to become active volunteers in places where their children serve.

Edna Ellison, Baptist Women on Mission director for the Mississippi Baptist Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), shared her experiences in learning to depend on God for her many needs when she became a widow at age 49.

Darlene Tenney surprised some of the parents with video presentations their children had prepared and sent for the meeting.

Raymond Kolb spoke to the

group about the use of "E-mail" to keep in contact with each other and with their children on the mission field.

Judge Robert P. Sugg, former chief justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court, and his wife Rene have a son Rob, who serves as a foreign missionary. Rene Sugg told of her involvement in teaching English to international students at her local church.

The Missionary Parents' Fellowship is open to any Southern Baptist with children who are missionaries. It meets twice a year, in April and September. The next meeting will be held at Camp Garaywa on Sept. 27-28.

This organization is unique — it is the only fellowship for parents of missionaries in the entire Southern Baptist Convention. It began as parents of Mississippi Southern Baptist missionaries tried to find ways to communicate

similar concerns and needs to each other. Its main purpose is to keep the parents of missionaries in far away places in touch with families of other missionaries.

The current president of the group is James R. (Jimmy) Walker. Program chairperson is Darlene Tenney; secretary/treasurer is Glen Williams; and prayer chain coordinators are Bill and Jeanette Sellers.

For more information contact the Mississippi WMU, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

Walker is pastor of Calvary Church, Braxton. His daughter Lynn Hutchinson serves alongside husband Michael in Guinea Bissau, West Africa. The Hutchinsons are on furlough in Long Beach until February 1997.

Rogers, Land join call for GOP to maintain its pro-life plank

WASHINGTON, D.C. (BP) — Southern Baptist megachurch pastor Adrian Rogers, Bellevue Church, Memphis, and agency head Richard Land, Christian Life Commission, have joined 10 other pro-life/pro-family leaders in calling on the Republican Party to readopt without change the pro-life plank in its platform.

The statement was drafted in the wake of comments attributed to Christian Coalition Executive Director Ralph Reed by **The New York Times** which indicated a willingness to liberalize the platform language.

Reed later labeled the report "totally inaccurate" and said he opposed any change which "would signal a retreat from (the platform's) defense of innocent human life."

The statement signed by Rogers and Land supports readoption of the GOP pro-life plank from the 1984, '88, and '92 platforms "without any change or deletion."

While it did not refer to Reed's comments, the statement said, "In the past week, there has been considerable media comment about proposals to change this language.

Such comments show that any change or deletion would be interpreted as a retreat from the Republican Party's principled position."

Among other signers of the statement were James Dobson, president of Focus on the Family; Chuck Colson, chairman of Prison Fellowship Ministries; Gary Bauer, president of Family Research Council; and Beverly LaHaye, chairman of Concerned Women for America. The statement, released May 14, appeared with its list of signers as a full-page ad in the May 15 issue of **The Washington Times**.

In interviews, Rogers and Land both said the statement transcends party politics.

"While we are fully aware some will interpret this politically, it is absolutely apolitical and totally moral to stand up for the unborn," said Rogers. "Had the Democratic Party a pro-life plank they were thinking about removing correspondingly, this would have been directed toward them."

"It rises above the political. It's just a plea for anyone to protect the unborn. Somebody has to speak up for the unborn, because they cannot speak for themselves."

"The Christian Coalition opposes abortion in every case except when the mother's life is in danger," Reed said in a prepared statement.

"We will oppose with every fiber in our being any effort to include a rape and incest exception in the pro-life plank or to drop a call for constitutional and legal remedies such as an amendment to the Constitution."

Others who signed the statement calling for readoption of the current pro-life plank in the GOP platform were Judie Brown, president of American Life League; D. James Kennedy, a Presbyterian pastor and president of Coral Ridge Ministries; Richard John Neuhaus, a Roman Catholic priest and editor-in-chief of **First Things** magazine; Phyllis Schlafly, president of Eagle Forum and chairman of the Republican National Coalition for Life; Paul Weyrich, president of the Free Congress Foundation; and Jack Willke, president of Life Issues Institute and the International Right to Life Federation.

In addition to Rogers and Land, Bauer, Colson, and LaHaye are members of Southern Baptist churches.

Area 4 senior rep Moore honored

Levon Moore (right) recently received a 10-year plaque upon his resignation as Area 4 Senior Adult representative. Glenn Shows (left) presented the plaque at the Area 4 senior adult rally held at East End Church, Columbus. The rally held at East End Church was one of six state area rallies held across Mississippi this spring, with 1,938 participants from 233 churches. Shows is adult and family ministry consultant for the Discipleship and Family Ministries Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.



'96 Four Part Music Festival

At Crossgates Church, Brandon, Feb. 24, youths in grades 10-12 participated in the State Youth Four Part Music Festival sponsored by the Church Music Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. In the keyboard adjudication all participants scored superior on each presentation and were awarded \$25 scholarships to a Baptist summer music event. Seniors receiving college music scholarship awards of \$200 are: (from left, back row) Kim Granger, Natchez; Jeff Crow, Greenwood; Michelle Crowe, Columbus; and Heather K. Lowry, Soso; (front row) Monica Watkins, Petal; Melanie Ann Sprayberry, Ethel; Heather Hite, Walls. Not pictured is Angie Hale, Sledge. In addition, 12 area Keyboard Festivals were held in the state the last weekend in January with 1,284 participants in grades 1-12. These represented 425 churches from 51 associations, 156 towns and cities. Three hundred twenty-eight music leaders and church members assisted. Participants in grades 10-12 who achieved superior in their presentations were invited to attend the keyboard part of the State Youth Four Part Music Festival.

Head of editors' group renews plea for open restructure meetings

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (ABP) — A Baptist state paper editor has urged a team implementing a massive restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention to reconsider its decision to close its meetings to the press.

Bill Webb, editor of the Missouri paper **Word & Way** and president of the Association of State Baptist Papers, wrote Imple-

FBC Bay St. Louis notes centennial

First Church, Bay St. Louis, will celebrate its centennial on June 8-9. The celebration will begin with an Evening of Memories at the Hancock High School Commons with a buffet meal, June 8 at 6 p.m. Banquet tickets are \$6 per person. The evening will feature a historic video presentation, special music, and memories shared for former church staff members.

The celebration will continue on Sunday, June 9, with a centennial program at 8:45 a.m. in the sanctuary highlighted by a 10:30 a.m. worship service. Nathan Barber will be the guest speaker. For further information call the church office at (601) 467-4005. Ed Deuschle is pastor.

mentation Task Force chairman Bob Reccord April 29 to renew the editors' request for open meetings.

The editors called for open meetings of the task force at their association's annual meeting in February. Reccord wrote Webb April 24 to inform him the committee had voted unanimously to keep the meetings closed, citing legal and personnel issues. Reports of meetings would be released through Baptist Press, the Southern Baptist news service, Reccord said.

In his response letter, Webb said he was "disappointed with the task force's decision that every meeting must be completely closed." He urged the task force to "continue to revisit this request."

"Open meetings are almost always in the best interests of the Southern Baptist constituency, especially when such significant matters are under consideration," he wrote. "Even if the task force and its legal counsel do not feel that is possible at present, it may become advisable in subsequent meetings."

Webb also asked Reccord to make himself available to journalists for questions.

"Because the task force's meetings are closed, it will be important for Baptist editors to have access to you as chairperson and spokesperson for follow-up questions regarding Baptist Press reports of your meetings," Webb wrote.

New Orleans SBC-Related Meetings and Events

Louisiana Superdome — June 11-13

WCC alumni lunch

William Carey College's annual alumni luncheon will be held June 11 at 12:15 p.m. in Quail Room 7, Loge Level, at the Louisiana Superdome. Tickets are \$10, and can be purchased at the Carey College display booth beginning June 10.

CBF luncheon

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

of Louisiana (CBFL) will host Cecil Sherman, coordinator of the CBF, as speaker at a "Friends of CBF Fellowship Luncheon" on Tues., June 11, at 12 noon in New Orleans. For further information call Al Kessler, CBFL moderator, (318) 865-2795.

Worship services

Celebration Church in Metairie will hold special worship services on June 9. Speakers for the services will be: 8 a.m., Ron Phillips

of Hixson, Tenn.; 9:30 a.m., Jim Henry of Orlando, Fla.; and 10:45 a.m., Don Wilton of Spartanburg, S.C. For more information, call the church at (504) 887-7689.

Pastors' luncheon

Rapha will host a complimentary luncheon for pastors and their spouses during the SBC Pastors' Conference on June 10 in New Orleans. The luncheon will be

held at the Hyatt Regency New Orleans, 12 p.m.-1:30 p.m. Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Church in suburban Memphis, will be the featured speaker. To attend, write to Freddie Gage by June 3: P.O. Box 156, Euless, TX 76039; or FAX (817) 545-2731.

Leadership seminar

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Author and preacher Peter Mar-

shall will be among the featured speakers during the Southern Baptist Association of Christian Schools' "Christian School Leadership Seminar 96" June 13-15 at New Orleans Seminary. The Southern Baptist Association of Christian Schools is a professional Christian education organization of Southern Baptist Christian schools and their leaders. For registration information, call the association at (800) 722-2764.

Missions Day Camp Scheduled

Missions Day Camp will be provided for boys and girls who will have completed grades 1-6 this year and whose parents are attending the annual meeting. It is sponsored by the children and youth division of the Brotherhood Commission, with assistance from Texas Baptist Men and the host association.

This year the process for Missions Day Camp registration has changed. This is the first time pre-registration has been offered. To pre-register a child, write SBC Missions Day Camp, Brotherhood Commission, SBC, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104 or call (901) 272-2461 and a registration packet will be mailed to you. Pre-registration must be received by the Brotherhood Commission.

Missions Day Camp provides a missions education program for children of messengers during all daytime sessions of the convention as follows: Tues., 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Wed., 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Thurs., 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Elliff lists leaders' standards

INDIANAPOLIS (BP) — Tom Elliff, to date the only known nominee for Southern Baptist Convention president, listed "four standards" he will use, if elected, for selecting members of key SBC committees.

Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla., listed the standards in an interview with John Yeats, editor of the **Indiana Baptist**, in the newspaper's May 7 issue.

Election of the SBC president is scheduled for the opening day of the June 11-13 SBC annual meeting in the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans. Current SBC President and Orlando, Fla., pastor Jim Henry will moderate this year's meeting, completing his second one-year term.

The SBC president, although an honorary position, has influential appointive powers. The president appoints the Committee on Committees which in turn is responsible for nominating the convention's Committee on Nominations, a group responsible for nominating directors and trustees of all SBC agencies. The president also appoints a Committee on Resolutions, Tellers Committee and Credentials Committee.

Elliff said appointees:

- "must clearly be an individual who knows Christ and has a daily walk with him."
- "must be clearly committed to the Southern Baptist view that the Bible is the inerrant and infallible Word of God."
- must have a "Christian walk and commitment ... acknowledged by his or her peers."
- "must see the appointment as a place of service rather than a place of 'positional glory.'"

Romanians plead for vols

The Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission in Memphis has issued an emergency construction request for four teams to assist in the construction of a missionary duplex in Bucuresti, the capital city of Romania in eastern Europe.

The four teams will each have 12 working days in Bucuresti and an additional two days for travel. Specific dates and needs of the teams include:

- Team 1 (June 1-13): 10-12 carpenters for framing.
- Team 2 (June 11-24): two electricians, two plumbers, and two HVAC workers.
- Team 3 (June 25-July 8): four drywall workers, four painters, and two helpers.
- Team 4 (July 3-15): three trim carpenters and two helpers.

Passports and visas are required. The Brotherhood Commission will assist in obtaining visas.

Approximate cost of the trip from Memphis is \$1640; the final amount is currently being developed.

For more information, contact Carol Spurlin or Herschel Wells at the Brotherhood Commission, toll free at (800) 280-1891.

Staying Well Informed

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It was a story book romance. They fell in love and got married with the promise of living "happily ever after." Soon, there was a bundle of joy — accompanied by a bundle of bills. They started arguing constantly — usually over the money. Rather than a discussion of their problems, their talks turned into angry verbal attacks. Then they finally stopped talking at all.

Their relationship was in serious danger.

Thank goodness, they went to their pastor for help. And thank goodness, their pastor referred them to the Samaritan Counseling Center. The Samaritan Counseling Center is Mississippi's only accredited pastoral counseling center. With a staff of 10 professional counselors, the Center is qualified to help individuals and families find solutions to their problems. After an assessment by Center Director Dr. Barry Click, the couple began to openly discuss their problems.

They expressed the pain and anger they had held in.

It wasn't easy at first. But gradually, they began to learn communication skills and ways to resolve their conflicts. They began to move toward a more intimate relationship. Now, their marriage has another chance...thanks to their pastor and the Samaritan Counseling Center.

Do you know someone who needs help coping with depression, anxiety, grief or relationships?

If you know someone trapped in the "spiral of helplessness," the Samaritan Counseling Center is there to help. Referrals may be made by your pastor or through direct contact with the Center.

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MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST MEDICAL CENTER

Mississippi missionary says Bosnians responsive to gospel

TUZLA, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Thousands of people in this war-weary land seek peace for their battered spirits and many are finding Jesus Christ is their only remedy, reported **Larry Cox, a Mississippi native** who oversees work of the Foreign Mission Board (FMB) in central Europe.

Cox, a missionary with the board, reached this conclusion after traveling across Bosnia during mid-April.

"There is a window of openness right now in Bosnia. People all over the country are open to

talk about their relationship with God," he said.

One of the most dramatic indications of the spiritual searching under way in Bosnia was during a four-day evangelistic campaign in Tuzla, a key city in northeastern Bosnia-Herzegovina, during early April, he said. More than 100 people publicly signaled their desire to become followers of Christ during those meetings, which were held in a hotel conference room.

Twenty people attended a Bible study in Tuzla held as part

of the follow-up to the Tuzla campaign, said Cox, who attended the study.

"These were serious, mature adults, ages 30 to 50, who have survived — the war. Now they are seeking something more in their lives," he noted.

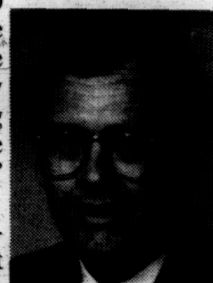
Bratko Horvat, a Baptist layman from Puscine, Croatia, organized the campaign as part of his efforts to start a Baptist church in Tuzla. Horvat runs an electronics business, but during the war became one of the leading Baptist relief workers in Croatia. He often sent his own trucks into battle-stricken Bosnia to deliver food and other aid to suffering refugees.

Horvat's war-time ministry put him in touch with thousands of refugees. Now he is following up on those earlier contacts and has an open door to present the gospel.

Bosnians of all backgrounds welcome him into their homes as someone who helped them when their need was greatest. They listen carefully when he shares with them the joy of his relationship with Jesus Christ.

People in all three Bosnian ethnic groups have a religious heritage, Cox said. Bosnian Croats have a Roman Catholic background; Bosnian Serbs have an Orthodox background and the Bosnian Muslims have a Muslim background.

"But for most of them their religious identity is just a heritage, part of their background. Most are not practicing followers," Cox said.



Cox



AFTERMATH — Falling snow cannot soften the bleak destruction marking an area called Krijina by Serbs before Croatian forces pushed them out late in 1995. Heavy artillery shelling took place here during the war. Officials estimate 80% of the houses have been destroyed. This scene is just a few miles from Karlovac Baptist Church, which ministers to war victims and distributes food provided by Southern Baptists. Teams of Indiana Baptists will begin visiting this area in the spring as they launch a three-year partnership with Croatian Baptists. Their work will include teaching and church building. The first project by two Indiana teams last year won praise from Southern Baptist missionaries and Croatian Baptists. (BP photo by Don Rutledge)

Whatever the religious background, the Yugoslavian war's ugliness is etched into many minds here, Cox said. He described new Christian believers who told them of the day a rocket fell outside their house and killed six neighbor children who were playing outside.

Cox works out of the FMB's Europe area office in Wiesbaden, Germany. Earlier he served as a foreign missionary to Burkina Faso, West Africa, and also worked with the Brotherhood Commission in Memphis.

Cox traveled across Bosnia with Bill Steele, a foreign missionary based in Slovenia who coordinates the board's work in the Balkans, including the former Yugoslavia area.

"I have seen destruction after hurricanes and earthquakes, but the destruction here in Bosnia is much worse because it was deliberate destruction," said Cox.

He visited some Bosnian towns in which every building was destroyed by dynamite. Troops blew up some small houses so isolated they could be reached only by a footpath, he said.

Cox told of staying in the

home of one Bosnian family in which the bedroom door was still riddled by bullet holes. In Sarajevo he walked down the infamous "Sniper Alley" where pedestrians were mowed down by unseen gunmen just a few months ago.

Despite the relative peace in the city now, Cox said, "people are still suffering."

The break in relationships among the people will take years to heal, Cox said. He told of seeing groups of people stopped alongside the road within the safe passage zones dividing the different ethnic sector in the country — the cars bore license plates from Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia. He found this puzzling until locals explained that for thousands of families who have intermarried — Croatian and Serbian, for example — such safe passage areas are the only places they can meet in safety.

"The scene looked almost like a tailgate party at a football game, but it's tragic to realize the real situation they're in," Cox said. "It shows how much some of them want to live together. These are not people who want to fight."

The FMB now has missionaries stationed both in Croatia and Yugoslavia and is seeking two church planter/developers for Bosnia-Herzegovina. Board administrators are also preparing a mobilization plan for the region to help Southern Baptists respond quickly to post-war realities.



FAMILY IN NEED — Nikolina Mraovic (left) and her mother Ruzica look through a box of food brought to them by Baptist pastor Ladislav Ruzick and his wife Melany. The Mraovics are more fortunate than many Croats who have lost everything, but with five children they still have trouble living from month to month. The father is in Germany to earn money for his family. Southern Baptists have helped provide food to many thousands of families like these whose lives have been shattered by the war in the former Yugoslavia. Fighting raged very near the Mraovic apartment last year. (BP photo by Don Rutledge)

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Linda Reeves, Judy Haney
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*originally scheduled for Colonial Heights BC, Southaven

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Staff Changes

Raymond Road Church, Jackson, has added **Tammy Anderson** and **Steven Barnett** to its staff. Anderson was called as minister of youth and children. A native of Saraland, Ala., she received her education at Judson College and New Orleans Seminary. Her previous place

Anderson

of service was Lafitte Church, Lafitte, Ala. Barnett was called as minister of music. A native of Clinton, he received his education at Mississippi College. His previous place of service was Woodville Heights Church, Jackson.

First Church, Durant, has called **L. Daniel Watts** as pastor effective April 7. A native of Jackson, Watts received his education at Clarke College, Grand Canyon College, and New Orleans Seminary. Since 1978 he has served as pastor of Raymond Road, Jackson.

First Church, McHenry, has called **Kenneth McLendon** as pastor effective Feb. 25. He previously served at Antioch Church, Leakesville.

Davis Berryhill's last service to preach as pastor of **Immanuel Church, Magnolia,** will be May 26. Due to health reasons, he is resigning as pastor. He has served as assistant pastor and pastor of Immanuel Church for 30 years. Dinner will be served in fellow-

ship hall following the 10:45 a.m. worship service. Susan Berryhill, the pastor's wife, who has served as church organist for 28 years, will render several organ arrangements during the service.

First Church, Picayune, has called **Jimmy Albritton** as interim pastor. Albritton served as pastor of Zoar Church, Baton Rouge, La. He recently retired from full-time service and now resides in Picayune.

Lynn Ray Road Church, Petal, has called **Isom Hill** as pastor. He has served as pastor of Pleasant Grove Church in Ozark, Ala., for the last 16 years. He also pastored churches in Georgia and South Carolina. A May 5 fellowship was held for Hill and his wife.

Hill

Zion Church, Pontotoc, has called **Tim Moore** as pastor effective May 12. A native of Birmingham, Ala., he received his education at Samford University and New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was Phalti Church, Jeff Davis Association.

Mt. Carmel Church, Edinburg, has called **Keith Fulton** as pastor effective April 28. He is a graduate of Clarke College, Mississippi College, and New Orleans Seminary. Fulton pastored in

Neshoba County for 12 years.

Calvary Church, Gloster, has called **Errol Faust** as pastor effective March 1. He and his family moved to Gloster from New Orleans Seminary.

Clarke Venable Memorial Church, Newton, has called **David Grumbach** as pastor effective June 1. A native of New Orleans, Grumbach received his education at Clarke College, Mississippi College, and New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was Fellowship Church, Meridian. Richard Ethridge has been serving as interim pastor at Clarke Venable Memorial Church.

Rob Boyd, currently pastor of First Church, Indianola, has accepted the call of **First Church, Clinton,** to become its pastor effective June 1. A native of Meridian, Boyd is a graduate of Bay St. Louis High School and University of Southern Mississippi. He holds the master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from New Orleans Seminary.

Boyd

Revival Dates

McDonald Union (Lena): May 27-31; 7 p.m.: Phil Kitchens, evangelist; Scott Vaughn, music; Dale Round, pastor.

New Black Jack (Neshoba): May 27-31; 7 p.m.: Don Savell, pastor of Arlington Church, evangelist; Hugh Martin, pastor.

Sand Hill, Philadelphia: May 26-31; Sunday, 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Grady Collins, guest speaker; Joe Scire, Sand Hill, music; David Hardy, pastor.

Shiloh (Carroll): May 26-29; Sunday, 11 a.m. and dinner at the church; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; Sterling Davis, Louisville, evangelist; Doug Warren, pastor, music.

Weathersby (Simpson): May 26-31; Sunday, 10 a.m. Sunday School, 11 a.m. service, noon lunch; Mon.-Fri., 7:30 p.m.; Joe Royalty, Petal, evangelist; Don Walker, Magee, music; Foy Killingsworth, pastor.

Pearlhaven, Brookhaven: May 26-31; Sunday, 11 a.m., noon dinner on the grounds, and 6 p.m.; Frank Shields, Forrest Hill, La., evangelist; Frank Stiedle, Canton, music; Glen Mullins, pastor.

First, Nettleton: June 2-5; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; David Hamilton, Verona, evangelist; Randy Wood, Verona, music; George C. Johnson, pastor.

County Line, Carthage: June 2-5; 7 p.m. nightly; Buford Usry,

Calhoun City, evangelist; Robby Robertson, Kosciusko, music; Roger Howe, pastor.

Crooked Creek, Silver Creek: May 26-31; Sunday, 11 a.m. followed by covered dish lunch, and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m. service, covered dish lunch, and 7 p.m. service; Don Taylor, Oakvale, evangelist; Robert Andrews, Byram, music; Mike Grenn, pastor.

Fentress, Ackerman: June 9-12; Sunday, 11 a.m., lunch at noon, and 7:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; James T. Bryant, Eupora, evangelist; Jerry Wise, pastor.

Mt. Moriah, Bogue Chitto: June 16-19; Sunday, Sunday School, 10 a.m., worship, 11 a.m., and 2 p.m. service; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Danny Lanier, evangelist; Brad Johnson, music; Danny Moss, pastor.

Woolmarket, Biloxi: May 26-29; 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. daily; Tommy Mosser, Bayou View Church, evangelist; Brad and Tammy Jones, music; Paul Crowley, pastor.

Vacation Bible Schools

Mt. Moriah Church, Bogue Chitto: June 3-7; 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.; Danny Moss, pastor; For more information, call (601) 833-8858.

Victory Church, Bassfield (Covington-Jeff Davis): June 3-7; 9-11 a.m.

Revival Results

Dorsey, Mantachie (Itawamba): April 21-25; Steve Peterman, Gulfport, evangelist; Mr. and Mrs. Mike Nier, Gulfport, music; six professions of faith; Jerry Estes, pastor.

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Just for the Record

Commission Road Church, Long Beach, broke ground on Easter Sunday for a new 5,000 square-foot preschool and educational building. The building program also includes renovation of existing church facilities. Manning the shovels at the ground breaking were (from left) George Turner, project contractor; Bobby Perry, Gulf Coast Association director of missions and Challenge to Build consultant; Greg Martin, pastor; and Andrew Lombardo, building committee chairman.

Briar Hill marks 100

A special service will be held at Briar Hill Church, Florence, on May 26 to commemorate over 100 years of services in one building.

The order of service for the day will include: first worship, 8:30 a.m.; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; second worship, 10:30 a.m.; lunch in fellowship hall; and 1:30 p.m. service with special guests.

Malcolm Pinion is pastor.



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Names in the News

Friendship, Brookhaven: May 26; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; noon lunch followed by afternoon service; Lewis Curtis, former pastor, guest speaker; Wiley Reid, pastor.

New Black Jack (Neshoba): May 26; 10:30 a.m.; David Jay, former pastor, guest speaker; dinner served and afternoon singing with "Sonrise" (Ronald Fulton, Cindy Lee, and William Crenshaw) guest singers; Hugh Martin, pastor.

County Line (Wayne): May 26; 10:45 a.m.; Thomas Balch, guest speaker; lunch at noon; afternoon gospel music program featuring Gulf City Boys, Pascagoula; J. Wilbur Hall, pastor.

Antioch (Lawrence): May 26; worship, 11 a.m.; 1:15 p.m., singing; Kenny Peavey, speaker; Jackie Cooke, pastor.

New Bethel (Neshoba): May 26; Ricky Goldman, guest speaker; covered-dish lunch in fellow-

ship hall; James E. Griffith, pastor.

Center Hill (Monroe): June 2; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; covered dish at noon; singing, 1:30 p.m.; The Messengers, guest singers; James M. Towery, pastor.

Arlington, Bogue Chitto: May 26; regular morning worship service; David Carter, Nashville, former pastor, guest speaker; covered dish lunch, noon; afternoon singing, 1:30 p.m.; no night service; Bob Lynch, interim pastor.

Duffee, Little Rock: May 26; 10 a.m. worship service; Ken Rhodes, Poplarville, guest speaker; noon lunch in fellowship hall; afternoon singing with the Messengers, 1:30 p.m.; no night service; Terry Goodman, pastor.

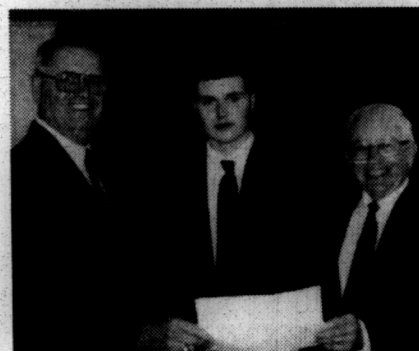
Concord, McCall's Creek: May 26; morning service, 11 a.m.; Ted Bowlin, speaker; dinner on the grounds; afternoon service, 1:15 p.m.; donations collected for Concord Cemetery Fund.



Como Church recently presented **Lamar Holcombe** (left) with a certificate of excellence in honor of his 54 years of service as deacon. Participating in the ceremony were his wife Wylma and Andy Brasher, pastor. The certificate was presented to Holcombe during the church's 110th anniversary celebration on April 4.



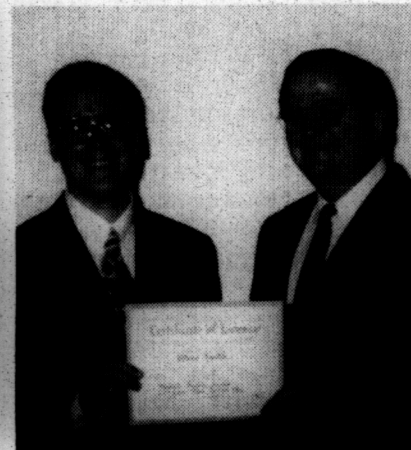
Dumas Church, Dumas, recently ordained **Shawn Davis** to the ministry. Pictured, left to right, are Mike Smith, pastor of Dumas Church at the time of the ordination and now pastor in Alabama; James Lewis, pastor of First Church, New Albany; Davis; and James Travis, professor at Blue Mountain College. Davis is serving as pastor of Mt. Olive Church, Tippah County, and attending Mid-America Seminary in Memphis. He is married to the former Lynita Pinkston. Marvin Robbins is interim pastor of Dumas Church.



Faith Church, Benton-Tippah Association, recently licensed Gary Roberson (second from left) to the gospel ministry. Roberson is a student at Blue Mountain College. With him (from left) are W.G. Dowdy, pastor, and James Travis, Bible professor, Blue Mountain College.



Michael Webb of Vaiden was one of 13 Holmes Community College Baptist Student Union members to travel to Siguatepeque, Honduras, on a March 8-15 mission trip. The mission trip was under the direction of Michael Kelly.



Woodville Heights Church, Jackson, licensed Steve Smith (left) to the gospel ministry. Wayne Kimbrough, pastor, presented the certificate of license to Smith.

INFORMING. ENTERTAINING. INSPIRING. CHALLENGING.

1996 WMU Annual Meeting

Whether you are a longtime WMUer, a curious new member, or a husband who loves WMU, this is one meeting you won't want to miss! The WMU Annual Meeting will be held June 9-10 at the New Orleans Marriott. This two-day WMU extravaganza promises to inform you, entertain you, inspire you, and most of all, challenge you to support missions like never before.

HIGHLIGHTS WILL INCLUDE:

- **OTHER FEATURED SPEAKERS:** Leonard Sweet, Dean of Theology, Drew University, Madison, N.J. Diana Garland, Louisville, Ky. Lyle Schaller, Research Associate, National Evangelistic Association, Naperville, Ill.
- Testimonies by home and foreign missionaries
- Messages from Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis and Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin
- Election of new WMU president

General Sessions* will be held at the New Orleans Marriott (555 Canal Street) on Sunday, June 9, at 2:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.; and Monday, June 10, at 9:30 a.m., 2:00 p.m., and 7:00 p.m.



Woman's Missionary Union

*No registration or cost required to attend the general sessions.

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — **Mark Wingfield** has been elected editor of the **Western Recorder**, the weekly newspaper affiliated with the Kentucky Convention. Wingfield, 34, was nominated for the post April 2 by the newspaper's board of directors. Under

Mac Parker, pastor, dies

Mac Parker, 69, pastor of Grace Church in Jones County, died of heart failure May 17 in Laurel. Funeral services were held May 20.

Parker was a Jones County native, and a charter member of Grace Church, where he had been pastor for 19 years. Prior to that, he had served Pendorff and Freedom churches in Jones County, and Pleasant Grove Church in Wayne County.

He held the doctoral degree from New Orleans Seminary, and was a graduate of Jones County Junior College, William Carey College, and the University of Southern Mississippi.

He is survived by his wife Norma Lee; son James Edward of Laurel, pastor of Tallahoma Church; daughters Linda Ruth Hearn of Myrick, and Norma "Jean" Scruggs and Janet Katherine Williams, both of Laurel; two brothers; three sisters; eight grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

terms of a covenant agreement between the **Recorder** and the state convention, the state convention's executive board retains the right to elect the editor upon the **Recorder** board's nomination. The Kentucky Convention executive board affirmed Wingfield's nomination May 6 with a standing vote.

Catherine B. Hatten, 99, of Gulfport, died April 26. The Grenada native was the last living charter member of First Church of Lyman. She was a retired school teacher, and a graduate of Millsaps College in Jackson. She taught Sunday School at First, Lyman, for more than 50 years. Hatten was preceded in death by her husband Burnell. Survivors include son Kenneth of Gulfport, two grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

W. Craig Turner has been named the executive vice president and chief academic officer at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas. Lanny Hall, president of the Baptist-affiliated school, made the announcement on April 24. Turner's 25-year teaching career includes service at Mississippi College and Baylor University.

The Mississippi College (MC) Department of Biological Sciences has selected seven students to receive summer research fellowships through a grant received by



Robert C. (Bob) Moore, a student at Mid-America Seminary and director of youth/education at First Church, Byhalia, was ordained to the ministry March 17. John Mahony, Mid-America Seminary faculty, delivered the charge to the candidate. Glenn E. Bien, pastor, gave the charge to the church and presented a certificate and Bible to Moore. His father, Austin Moore Jr., gave the ordination message. Moore graduated from Mid-America Seminary May 10 and will assume the position of associate pastor at First Church, Byhalia, on June 1.

MC from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. They are: Mac H. Alford of Liberty, Leffrage K. Robbins Jr. of Picayune, Susan E. Shamburger of Clinton, Laura P. Richards of Jackson, Hal J. Clark of McComb, Ashley N. Love of Brandon, and Samuel G. Tucker of Clinton.

Letters to the editor

Prayers sustained

Editor:

My wife Susan and I became parents of a little girl on Nov. 5, 1995. Susan had endured a rough pregnancy and was only six months along when we were told on a trip to the emergency room that we would have a child "within the next couple of hours."

I immediately began calling family and fellow church members for prayers and moral support. With God's guidance, all our wonderful doctors at Rush Hospital in Meridian were able to hold off delivery for 48 hours (the exact length of time the drugs needed in order to strengthen the baby's lungs).

Haley Suzanne was born weighing two pounds, 14 ounces. Susan was able to come home in a week, after which we began our daily 30-mile trips to see the baby (who was) hooked up to wires, machines, and monitors, and on/off oxygen for weeks. On Haley's two-month birthday, we were able to finally bring her home — still nearly a month before she was due.

I've told all this simply to say that prayer was all that got us through. We literally had friends, relatives, and multitudes of complete strangers praying for us night and day.

When the Bible says God supplies all our needs, believe it! Because of the need to keep a constantly warm environment for the baby, we spent nearly \$1,000 on butane gas, for which we received from churches and friends more than enough to cover this expense and several others, including groceries and gasoline to cover our hospital trips.

God has been so good to us that we sometimes are overwhelmed by it all. It is our sincere hope that this will be read by all those precious people who had a part in all this. "Thank you" seems so inadequate to express our gratitude for your wonderful support.

Please continue to pray for us, and please don't ever take even the smallest things in life for granted.

Brad Campbell
Cuba, Ala.

Editor's note: Brad is the son of Wayne Campbell, pastor of Chunky Church, Chunky.

God provides growth

Editor:

This is in reply to the article published in the April 11 issue, titled "Want your church to grow? Set a goal, make it known." Neil Jackson, a retired senior growth consultant for the Baptist Sunday School Board, was quoted as saying, "Church leaders committed to numerical and spiritual growth of their congregations should set a yearly baptism goal and plaster it on every swinging door in the

church." Quoting Proverbs 29:18, he goes on to say, "You have to have vision," and "Churches should learn from commercial advertising that repetition reinforces behavior."

I believe that even though Jackson's intentions are good, this method does not have biblical authority. There is much talk in today's secular world of goal-setting and mechanical mind manipulation to achieve the desired response in others.

God tells us in 2 Corinthians 10:3 that though we Christians live in the world, we are not to wage war as the world does but rather let God direct our methods. May we never forget that it is God who does the saving. Only the Spirit of God guides the lost to conviction (John 6:44).

I believe that Proverbs 29:18 tells us of a different vision, one that speaks of the importance of telling God's law and the blessings that come from keeping it. May we indeed write on our church doors, but instead of numbers let us write God's Word as he instructs us in Deuteronomy 6:6-9. In particular, let us write the Great Commission given by Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

We must allow the Holy Spirit to do this work. Follow God's leadership and give him, the King of all kings and Lord of all lords, the glory.

Loretta Ellis
Florence

Shameful memories

Editor:

Pills have always been hard to swallow, and that "Capsule" (March 14, 1996, concerning the Southern Baptist Annuity Board) is impossible for me to swallow.

In 1939, we had a minister who had a wife and four children. His salary was low and he had no car. He would preach the 11 o'clock service (and) after lunch walk approximately six miles to another church and preach a 2 o'clock service there. A motion made to increase his salary was not accepted. Can you fail to see how ashamed we are when we remember that period in our church history?

In the "Capsule," there is mention of billions in assets, millions in earnings, thousands in the \$50-a-month supplements to annuitants with very low monthly benefits. The Adopt-An-Annuitant program was funded by designated gifts. That \$50-a-month is the bitter pill.

How sad to know that their income does not allow for a little "happy gift" once in while. I can't help thinking of "money changers," beggar barns, or a "neighbor

saying 'be ye filled,'" and it saddens me.

That pill just won't go down.
Bertie Turner
Saltillo

Seeking volunteers

Editor:

Once again, we are in the home stretch of the recruitment process and are looking for assistance in meeting the total number of volunteers needed. The project is called Project Aero.

Project Aero is a strategic evangelistic outreach by Southern Baptist volunteers to folks in rural villages of Albania. Volunteers are urgently needed for the operation and maintenance of a base camp to support over 300 Baptist Student Union and Campus Crusade volunteers. Volunteers need to be skilled in either carpentry, plumbing, mechanics, nursing, cooking, or electrical work. For more information, call toll-free (800) 280-1891.

Herschel Wells, project manager
SBC Brotherhood Commission
Memphis

Thanks for help

Editor:

I want to take this opportunity to thank Mississippi Baptists for their role in Christian education. I am deeply indebted to them for their support while I was a student at William Carey College.

Furthermore, I have received financial support from the Mississippi Baptist Foundation which has offset my seminary tremendously! We could not have made it without it. West Salem, Green Leaf, and Eastern Star churches of Greene County have also gone the extra mile in prayer and financial support.

Now, as I graduate from Southwestern and assume a pastoral role in Butler, Ala., I cannot

help but praise God for all that Mississippi Baptists have meant to me. Mississippi has given me a wonderful spiritual heritage to draw from as I embark in full-time ministry. Please keep loving and giving through the Baptist Foundation and the Cooperative Program so that another young person's life can be influenced as well!

Grant McLain
Fort Worth, Texas

Seeking DOM

Editor:

We are now accepting resumes through June 1 for (the position of) director of missions for Mississippi Association. Send resumes to:

Director of Missions Search
Committee
Mississippi Baptist Association
P.O. Box 321
Liberty, MS 39645
(601) 657-4983
Sammy Smith, chairman
Gloster

Aid gives leg-up

Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank the Mississippi Baptist Convention and the Board of Ministerial Education for supporting my education. My four years at Mississippi College have been a wonderful experience, and I am truly thankful that there are people who are concerned about the educational advancements of the ministerial students in Mississippi. I will never be able to adequately express my appreciation for the

monetary contribution that the Convention has provided me each month. Receiving this extra money has allowed me to better concentrate on earning my degree, rather than become burdened as to when and how my next income would be arriving. I am forever indebted to the graciousness of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

Rusty Bryant
Senior ministerial student
Mississippi College

Scholarship's gifts

Editor:

This letter is to express my appreciation to Mississippi Baptists for their support of ministerial students at Mississippi College. For the past six semesters, I have received a stipend assisting me in my education through the fund distributed by the Board of Ministerial Education.

This assistance has helped ease the financial strain of attending college. The money given to ministerial students pursuing their education will reap great dividends in the future. It does not take much acumen to realize that to invest in the lives of future ministerial leaders, is to invest in the future.

I have had the luxury of receiving support through the Clausen scholarship. May I say that this scholarship and the other money received from the Board of Ministerial Education is a direct result of Mississippi Baptists' faithful support to the work of the gospel?

Tim Sisk
Senior ministerial student
Mississippi College

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PART-TIME MUSIC Worship Leader needed in Attala County, at Springdale Baptist Church, located between Kosciusko and West. Send resume to: Personnel Committee, Rt. 2, Box 47, West, MS 39192; (601) 289-6592.

Uniform Lord, teach us to pray



By David Mitchell
Matthew 6

My youngest son Noah is 100% boy. His mischievousness and curiosity have often caused him to be the subject of many article and sermon illustrations. Recently I heard him in the kitchen saying, "Genie, I command you, make me a grilled cheese sandwich. Genie, I command you, fix me a drink." Often, we approach God in the same manner. When we bow to pray, it is almost as if we are saying, "God, I command you, fix my life. God, I command you, solve my problems." As we continue studying the Sermon on the Mount, we find that God has given us a perfect example of a perfect prayer.

The method of prayer (vv. 5-8). The humor of Jesus is seen as he paints a picture of the hypocrites' way of being righteous, standing on the street corner to be seen. It is easy to cast the first stone at the Pharisee, but when we begin to reflect on our own Pharisaism it becomes less humorous. We all like to feel spiritual and have our egos boosted, but Jesus noted that those who have as their motive in praying to be seen by others receive public attention, rather than God's, as their only reward. Jesus is not condemning public prayer. Instead he contrasts genuineness and hypocrisy. Prayer should be to God and not to build one's own spiritual reputation. The disciples were to enter into a private place, and there they were to address God "who is unseen," and there be given the appropriate reward.

The mechanics of prayer (vv. 9-13). Mechanics is defined in Webster's dictionary as "A branch of physical science that deals with energy and forces, and their effects on bodies." The mechanics of prayer is a branch of the supernatural experience with God that deals with his energy and forces, and their effect upon our lives. Here, Jesus gave us a model prayer that could be designated the "disciples' prayer." It is without question the best-known and most-frequently quoted portion of Jesus' teaching on prayer. Second century church members were commanded to recite this prayer three times each day because it was thought that such repetition would enhance their spirituality. This is difficult to understand, seeing that Jesus is teaching that vain repetition in prayer is meaningless.

So, we must ask ourselves what is the appropriate way to use the model prayer? The prayer can be divided into two sections which relate to the future coming of the kingdom and to God's actions in our everyday lives. We are to approach God as our loving parent who, through our intimate relationship with him, cares about our deepest concerns and enjoys our highest praise. Through prayer we are to reverence and honor God by glorifying and obeying his words. We are to pray for the consummation of the kingdom and God's ultimate divine rule over all men and women.

The second portion of the prayer focuses on the basic necessities of life. It is here that we see God's care and concern for our personal needs. Jesus suggested three requests in the model prayer. The first is for "our daily bread." This request carries with it total dependence on God. As God faithfully provided for the Israelites with manna that could not be stored for future use, so God will provide for our daily needs.

The second request is for forgiveness. Just as the disciple needs daily bread he also needs daily forgiveness. The disciple is to pray for forgiveness and the restoration of fellowship with God. Forgiveness that is received from God must also be shared. Those who refuse to forgive show their inability to receive forgiveness. Verses 14-15 reinforce the teaching that only the forgiving are allowed to receive forgiveness.

The third request is to "lead us not into temptation and deliver us from the one who causes evil." This request is an admission of our need for God's divine enablement as we encounter temptations from Satan.

The manner of prayer. Verses 14-15 relate to our attitude in prayer. God is not a genie whose lamp is to be rubbed so that he might answer our every need; rather our attitude must be one of humble forgiveness. God's forgiveness to us depends on our willingness to extend forgiveness to others. We in no way merit the forgiveness of God, but because God has forgiven his disciples, we receive forgiveness and are able to forgive others.

Mitchell is pastor of Van Winkle Church, Jackson.

Bible Book Promise of restoration



By Clayton Littlejohn
Zechariah 9-11

Morale was low among the Jewish people. That is understandable when you remember their situation. They had been disciplined for 70 years in Babylon. Only a fragment of their population returned to their homeland. Their new temple was small and less glorious than the former one, and they were being rebuked by God for impotent worship. Zechariah boosted their morale by revealing God's promise of a coming King and restoration of the land and divided kingdom. God's promise of restoration to his people demonstrates that his love and mercy never cease, even when he disciplines his people.

The coming of the King of peace (9:9-10). In the first eight verses of this chapter, God told how he would judge the nations surrounding Israel, which he did and will do in the future. He told about the first advent of Jesus. When he comes, Zechariah said, he would be just (righteous) and he would be righteous in all his judgments, and in his treatment of all people. Next, having salvation would be his mission. He would bring salvation to all who will receive it. At his first coming, he will be lowly (humble) and riding upon the foal of an ass. Jesus fulfilled this prophecy in Matthew 21:1-11, which shows the accuracy and inspiration of God's Holy Word. There is a long lapse of time after verse 9. In verse 10, we see the second coming of the King. At this time, he will take over completely and bring about universal peace. Notice he cuts off weapons of war and extends his kingdom's borders from sea to sea. What a glorious day this will be!

God's promise to deliver and restore his people (9:11-12). Some Jews were still in exile and some would be in the future. This is such a sure thing that Zechariah wrote as if it were past tense. The surety of God delivering and restoring his people was based upon the blood covenant he made with Abraham (Gen. 15:9-11), then with the nation (Ex. 24:5-8), and ultimately with the blood of Jesus (Heb. 9:20). The image of being captive in a pit with no water was a picture of no hope, unless someone redeemed you from it. Joseph was put into such a pit by his brothers (Gen. 37:24). Redemption was on the way with the new King. The new King would be a stronghold or solid fortress. Jesus is and will always be the Rock and Redeemer (Psalm 19:14). Through the centuries God has continued to redeem his people from the enemy. The day is coming when he will completely deliver and restore them to himself and their land.

A call to seek the true God (10:1-2). Idolatry was a continuing problem with God's people and one that carried severe consequences, yet the people continued to rely upon their idols. Where the idols had failed in producing rain (v. 10), God said, "Ask of the Lord and ye shall receive." The idols "spoke vanity" (could not help) and the "diviners have seen a lie" (v. 2). Diviners were supposed to see the future and give guidance, yet they were of no help. God was calling his people to seek him, the true God, and quit following idols that couldn't speak. Diviners were as hopeless as sheep without a shepherd. He still makes that call today.

God's promise to return his people to their land (10:6-10). This is a beautiful, encouraging text for the Jewish people. Notice that one day God will unite the divided kingdoms of Judah and Israel. Joseph (v. 6) represents the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom; Judah and Benjamin make up the Southern Kingdom. Where they had been cast off (separated and scattered), God would unite and bring them to their home. God said, "I will hiss for them" (v. 8). Hiss means to call or signal. This is what a shepherd would do to gather his sheep and this is what Jesus, the Good Shepherd, will do one day when he calls out his redeemed. God will extend their borders into Gilead and Lebanon because of the numerous amount that will be redeemed. Great days lie ahead for a restored Israel.

Littlejohn is pastor of Ingram Church, Baldwyn.

Life and Work You have work to do



By Linda Donnell
2 Thessalonians 3

The story is told of a woman who lived a good life to an old age. When she died and went to heaven, she presented herself bearing a small, lovely box which contained her life: all the people she had touched, things she had accomplished, memories she had made. The box was full. The angel who met her exclaimed over the box and put it away for safe keeping. As they were walking around heaven, they passed a large building. "What's in there?" questioned the woman. "I don't think you want to go in there right now," responded the angel. "Oh, but I do," said the woman. So, reluctantly the angel took her into the building which was filled with rows and rows of very large and beautiful boxes, each of which was inscribed with a name. On one she found her name.

"What's this?" she asked, as she struggled to get it down. "That is the box containing all the things you could have done with your life," the angel kindly, but sadly, answered. "Unfortunately the box you chose to fill was simply too small" (Mosaic, May 1996.)

Many of us may enter heaven, as did the woman in the story. God has work for us to do — many possibilities for our life. Paul recognized this and encouraged his readers to be about God's work as they awaited Christ's return.

Don't get sidetracked (vv. 3-5). Paul preceded his admonishment to work with an expression of his confidence in his converts. He believed that they were doing what he had taught them and would continue to do so. He reminded them that God would help them in their task. In verse 5, Paul made a short prayer for his fellow believers: that their patient waiting for Christ's return be joined with a love of God. Those Christians truly in love with the Lord and acting out of confidence in the fact that God is their direction and strength are less likely to be sidetracked in living out the possibilities that God has for their life.

Don't be lazy (vv. 6-10). After commending the Thessalonian believers, Paul proceeded to give them directions, correcting some things that were amiss among them — the chief of which was idleness of some members of the church. In doing so he used strong language: "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ we command you" (v. 6). Paul, indeed, wanted the church to understand that the call of a Christian demands industry. Along with the command, he presented himself as an example (v. 7). How many of us could ask new believers to look at our life as a pattern for living out God's possibilities?

Don't be a busybody (vv. 11-13). Not only did Paul confront his readers concerning idleness, he also pointed out that some had become busybodies (v. 11). Those who are idle in regard to God's business are more inclined to busy themselves in the matters of others. It has been said: "The mind of man is a busy thing; if it is not employed in doing good, it will be doing evil. It is certainly difficult to fill God's box of possibilities for us when we spend time in the affairs of others around us."

Paul ended his command toward industry with the exhortation to not become weary in well-doing (v. 13). This should be a call to many Christians today who are "stressed out" in their doing good. Perhaps this is because too often we try to work for the Lord rather than allowing him to work through us. Those who are obediently following God's direction should be able to "run and not grow weary" (Isa. 39:31).

Don't be shamed (vv. 14-15). What if Paul's readers did not obey his commands? He instructed the other Christians to help correct them, but in a friendly manner as brothers and sisters in Christ rather than as enemies. As we view those in our church and society who are unproductive, it is very easy to do so in contemptuous fashion. How can this help motivate toward any changed behavior? On the contrary, it is more likely to cause resentment than reformation. What are some redemptive ways in which you might relate to those who are disobedient?

God has a special work for each one of us whom he has called. Are you busy with that work? Are you working at filling up God's box of possibilities for your life, or are you simply busy filling what you see as your possibilities? In a stressed-out society, we should weigh the answer carefully.

Donnell is a member of First Church, Hattiesburg.

Miss. medical/dental vols lead Hondurans to Christ

By C.L. Austin

An entourage of 43 Baptists traveled to Santa Rosa de Aguan, Honduras, March 9-16, to minister to local citizenry's health and dental needs, but primarily to bring the message of Jesus Christ and to ask each of them to join us as Christians in a profession of faith.

The team captain was Ken Hopkins, minister to senior adults at Temple Church in Hattiesburg, assisted by Norman Bailey, Dan Ashley, and Charles Marx.

The word had filtered back that the voodoo worshippers in Santa Rosa did not wish for this Christian medical mission to occur. In

our prayers for the mission we asked our Lord and Savior to keep us safe from harm and to allow us to complete our mission in his name.

Four to five thousand people live in the village of Santa Rosa. We arranged the facilities in the community building for medical and dental personnel to examine and treat those registered. An eye surgeon was provided adjacent space. The roof of the structure leaked in the wind driven rain.

Our typical day began with devotions at 6:30 a.m., then breakfast, followed by medical and den-

tal attention to those who rapidly formed long lines outside the clinic facility. As they entered the clinic facility one of the Honduran missionaries would witness to each in turn. After supper would come a team meeting with lively discussions of the day's adventures, followed by church service.

Morning came and we mobilized for devotions and breakfast. Right on schedule, the people who had registered at the church began to appear for medical and dental therapy. The patients entered the facility under the close scrutiny of a very efficient Honduran missionary who registered each one and invited them to become Christians with a profession of faith. Happily, many did.

Nine doctors and nurses examined the patients and prescribed the medications indicated; three dentists examined the patients and performed the indicated procedures.

We were directed to visit the home of two young females who had been born with malformed bodies. We consulted with carpenter James Gibbs, who was part of our group, to construct a mobile conveyance. It was presented to the delighted girls and their family.

Enthusiastic attendance at church services and registration for medical and dental services, along with a marvelously functional Bible School for children, were magnetic attractions and well-attended.

The houses we entered were either concrete slabs or dirt floor, well trodden. A stove without a stove pipe, apparently used for cooking and warmth as needed, burned either wood or some slow burning amalgam. The roofs were layers of palm tree fronds with an adequate overhang. Though there had been a steady rainstorm for three days before we visited the homes, all of them appeared dry.

The presence of many hogs and chickens roaming freely about, along with coconut and banana trees, and the local fisherman apparently provided a balanced



Jerry Byrd (above photo, standing at right), a William Carey College religion major from Petal, preaches through an unidentified interpreter (standing at left) at Santa Rosa de Aguan Church in Honduras. Byrd was part of a Mississippi mission team that traveled to the central American country March 9-16 under the Mississippi/Honduras Partnership Project. The church's orchestra (below) performs during the worship service with musical instruments fashioned from a turtle shell, a bottle, and gourds.



diet for healthy, sturdy, well-muscled bodies.

Our supplies left behind in New Orleans never made it to Santa Rosa. Thus our medical supplies dwindled rapidly. The eye glasses that we had hoped to distribute to those with vision problems never became available. However, our dentists extracted an extraordinary number of teeth, and eye surgeons removed several pterygiums that threatened to occlude the vision of the victims.

There were 795 professions of faith; 2,258 medical patients; 7,281 prescriptions; 29 eye surg-

eries; 614 dental patients; 3,082 extractions; and a dozen house calls.

The sponsors and the leaders of this expedition into a land without wheels where voodoo drums are used to talk into the blackness of the night, deserve commendation. We all felt as though we were bearers of enlightenment and testimony to the glory of God.

Austin is a retired physician from Ocean Springs and a member of First United Methodist Church in



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

My best friend has the foulest mouth I have ever heard. Should I suggest counseling to help him overcome this habit?

Counseling would be beneficial, but you can help, too. When he speaks those foul words, ask him why he talks that way. He may do it to get attention or test your commitment to the friendship, or he simply may not have given it a lot of thought. Since our use of language is important (James 3:1-12), encourage him to note in writing each time he uses foul words and honestly ask himself, "What was I hoping to accomplish by using that word?" Expressing your disagreement over his use of foul language provides a Christian testimony on your part and forces him to look at himself as others see (and hear) him. Ephesians 5:4 (NIV) states, "Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving."

The Bible says I can live any

way I want and still go to heaven as long as I repent before I die. Isn't that what the prodigal son did with his life?

Your interpretation is interesting because the consequences of a sinful life are consistently described throughout the Bible. We all have a choice — to live by God's love and direction, or to do what we want. In our culture, the consequences of a sinful life are not emphasized nearly as much as the pleasure received from doing what we want. Be assured, however, there are consequences. The parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-31) provides a clear picture of sin consequences and of the unconditional love of our Father, but it doesn't teach us to live as we please on the premise that we can repent shortly before we die. God's grace is a free gift to all, and how we live our lives is the gift we return to him. To live your life as you choose is selfishness; to live your life pleasing the Creator is obedience.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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RFK OL NRS DUONRDCJ XONT WSXFZS UV
RUGJFN! ON KUL DCJJ FD ICHEZSVN; GOERN-
SFCLVSLJ, JFHESH OV ON; WCN VFK ZCGHSGSGL.

OLUOUR FVS: NKSVENT-FVS.

This week's clue: T equals Y.

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark Eleven: Twenty-Four.

BSU'ers partners with vols

Fourteen William Carey College students and Baptist Student Union Director Tim Glaze participated in the March 9-16 "medical brigade" to Santa Rosa de Aguan, Honduras.

The students were involved in every facet of the mission project. They participated as preachers, children's ministers, dental assistants, medical assistants, pharmacy assistants, and interpreters.

"The trip was plagued with seemingly impossible hurdles from the beginning. However, through Christ nothing is impossible. The persistent rain, muddy roads, swollen rivers, dangerous canoe trips, unseasonably cold weather, and other obstacles continued to drive the group toward an ever-more dependent faith in Christ and a clearer vision of the mission and purpose," said Glaze.

"The Spirit of the Lord moved in Santa Rosa de Aguan. We thank him for letting us join in where he was already at work," said Glaze.

The trip was coordinated through the Partnership Mission Office of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and included members from all over the state. Project coordinators were Ken Hopkins, minister to senior adults at Temple Church, Hattiesburg; and Temple deacon Norman Bailey.

Baptist-affiliated William Carey College is located in Hattiesburg.

Baptist Record

005-DTM 39
CARRIER ROUTE 291 5-23
SOUTHERN BAPT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
901 COMMERCE ST STE 401
NASHVILLE TN 37203-3620

Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205

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